No Plastic Bags

The Influence of Different Factors on Consumer Attitudes towards an Environmental Initiative

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Abstract
Environmental issues have within the recent years become a frequently debated matter and corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a new determinant for consumers purchase decisions. As a consequence of this, ever more companies have begun to implement different CSR initiatives in order to take responsibility for the environment. The arguments differ among researchers whether it is actually profitable for companies to invest in CSR initiatives.

In this study we have based upon the functional theory of attitudes and identified different factors that are likely to affect consumer attitudes towards an environmental CSR initiative and formed a model for this. The model postulates four main factors that are likely to affect consumers attitudes towards an environmental initiative; which attitude a consumer holds towards the actual product (in this case the paper bags) in question, the extent to which a consumer considers environmental responsibility to be important, the extent to which a consumer considers environmental issues to be a threat to her-/himself and the amount of information a consumer receives about the initiative. To test our model we used a quantitative approach and investigated the consumer attitudes towards the initiative no plastic bags at the shopping centre Strömpilen, Umeå.

We found that consumers in general are very positive towards the initiative. We then looked closer into what parts of our model that had significant impact on consumer attitudes towards the concept. The Chi-Square tests showed that three of four parts in the model could be verified. These parts were; the consumer’s attitude towards the actual product (in this case the paper bag), how important environmental responsibility is to a consumer and to what extent a consumer sees environmental issues as a threat to her-/himself. The fourth part of the model; the amount of information a consumer has received could not be verified. Thus the model was modified and was in the end constituted by the three parts that had been statistically verified.
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1 Introduction
In this chapter we convey to the reader the importance of the chosen subject; environmental initiatives and consumer attitudes. The background of the study is followed by the research problem and the purpose. The intention with this chapter is to emphasise the importance of the subject not only in the context of our study but also in the context of today’s global arena. As will be developed later on in this chapter, the study is based upon the environmental approach of the Strömpilen shopping centre located in Umeå, Sweden.

1.1 Background

“Most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations.”


It can be established that the environment and the impact humanity has on it is a growing global concern. For instance, a report from the World Wide Fund (2008) presents that humanity’s footprint became larger than earth’s global capacity in the 1980s and that it has been increasing ever since. Continuing, the report states that in 2003 we exceeded the supply by 25 percent, which means that we borrowed three months from 2004 years supply. The concept of exceeding supply has become known as the overshoot day (or ecological debt day) and in 2008, according to both WWF and the Global Footprint Network web pages, this day took place on September 23rd. In context this means that the current standard of living necessitate the equivalent of 1.4 planets (Global Footprint Network).

A more environmentally aware public and their demand for a sustainable development has lead to the upspring of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). The European Commission defines CSR as:

“...a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (europa.eu)

According to Dembkowski and Hanmer-Lloyd (1994) the public share a growing environmental concern. In Worchester and Dawkins (2006) it is described how ethical issues have become of greater importance to consumers when evaluating a company. The way a company deals with ethical issues can have a direct influence on consumers purchase behaviour, or more indirectly, influence consumers’ evaluation and attitudes towards the company. This is further illustrated by using a study conducted by CSR Europe, presented by Worchester and Dawkins (2006), in 2000 performed in twelve European countries, where 70 percent of the participants state that a company’s dedication to social responsibility is very or quite important when they are making purchase decisions. Oket (2005) brings this to a new level when he introduces the views of Mastromartino (1993). According to the author a company’s commitment to social responsibility may actually work as a tie breaker in consumer purchases, more than ever if the consumer believes in the company’s activities.

In their article, Bhattacharya and Sen (2004:9) put forward the views of Brown and Dacin that stakeholders, primarily customers, are sensitive to firms’ motives to CSR activities. Bhattacharya and Sen (2004:10) continue by arguing that it is essential that executives realize “...how and why consumers’
respond to CSR initiatives...” One of the aspects that their study brings to light is that “...what works for one consumer segment does not work for another.” (2004:12). A recent article in the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter (15/01/09) connects good business opportunities with ethics. Ever more companies realises the importance of socially sustainable practices. In the article it is suggested that gradually a generation shift is under way; a generation that puts CSR in relation to a natural way of conducting business. To quote: “They know that they will be paying the price if they are not caring about the surrounding world.” (own translation). It is also suggested that a change does not necessarily need to be large; what counts are the small things.

It is important to be aware that the concept of CSR can be divided into a number of different sub-areas that companies may engage in. Some examples of these different categories can be found in Bhattacharya and Sen (2004): 1) Community support includes but is not limited to support of art and health programs, education and housing initiatives for economically disadvantaged; 2) Diversity includes but is not limited to gender, race and sexual orientation; 3) Employee support includes but is not limited to safety concern and job security; 4) Product includes but is not limited to product safety, R&D/innovation, marketing/contracting controversies and finally; 5) Environment includes but is not limited to environmentally friendly products, waste management, pollution control and recycling.

In an article in Harvard Business Review, Gifford (1997:11-12) call attention to companies different attitudes towards Going Green; taking care of the environment on the one side and at the same time trying to deal with profit-hungry shareholders. Based on a previous study the findings suggest that going green does not necessarily mean that a company will be less profitable. Gifford states that “...green companies are less risky investments and deserve a lower cost of capital” (1997:11). Just as Bhattacharya and Sen argued for executives’ importance to realize customers’ responsiveness to CSR initiatives, Gifford (1997) suggest that they also need to inform the market about the company’s activities by advertising, giving out reports and publishing detailed information on the company’s webpage. Perhaps it is by no means a coincidence that CSR issues are posted on web sites “...of more than 80% of the Fortune-500 companies...” (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004).

As put forward by Yoon and Gürhan-Canli (2004) Sen and Bhattacharya in 2001 argued that the CSR activities of companies can have an effect on purchase intentions both indirectly and directly. Various studies made within the past few decades draw attention to consumers purchase decisions/tie breakers. In general consumers seem to have positive attitudes towards companies that undertake socially responsible actions. One of these studies, made by Bhattacharya and Sen (2004), shows that information about a company’s CSR initiatives has a positive influence on consumers’ company evaluations. A positive attitude among consumers could benefit a company in several ways. For instance, a study conducted by Mohr and Webb (2007) illustrate that CSR has a positive effect on consumers’ attitudes towards a company and consequently increases consumers’ purchase intent. In addition, the results from the experiments in their study show that CSR with focus on environmental issues seemed to have the strongest effect on consumer responses.

Thus, again we can see that environmental issues can have an impact on consumers. In his article, Reinhardt (1998) discusses whether CSR activities are beneficial for a company and even more so in regards to environmental product differentiation. According to the author, the idea of environmental product differentiation for a company is to develop products that offer greater environmental bene-
fits, alternatively are less harmful for the environment in comparison to competing products. Another aspect of environmental product differentiation can be to develop products or services that are less environmentally burdensome to produce than those offered by competitors. The key point of differentiation is to offer a product (or service) that differs from those of competitors, therefore the benefits of differentiation will be lost if competitors start offering the same products. Naturally, this is also the case of environmental product differentiation. (Reinhardt, 1998)

A big issue that affects the environment on a daily basis is the use of plastic bags. Did you know that it takes nature roughly 400 years to decompose a traditional plastic bag? Did you know that Sweden consumes 2.7 billion plastic bags every year? That means more or less 300 plastic bags per person and year (Strömpilen, 2009). As you, the reader, might reason by now is that this is not a sustainable situation. One town that has realised this is Modbury, a small West Country town located in south Devon, Great Britain. As the first place in Europe, Modbury stopped issuing plastic bags in 2007. (Modbury, 2009)

Based on the Modbury case, Strömpilen (a shopping centre situated in Umeå) decided to take a step towards a better environment. On the 11th of October 2008, as the first shopping centre in Sweden, Strömpilen with its shops started to charge shoppers for bags and the plastic bags were replaced by paper bags – the no plastic bags initiative. This way shoppers are encouraged to bring own bags or pay for biodegradable ones. This project is operated together with Umeå University as well as Umeå municipality. (Strömpilen, 2009)

“Strömpilen is the leading shopping centre in Umeå and is located by the Umeå river (Umeälven) a few kilometres downstream from the city centre with bike distance to the central town as well as a few of the larger housing areas in Umeå. At Strömpilen 22 stores are gathered in four buildings. An expansion of Strömpilen has been started and the shopping centre will within a few years have grown to twice its size today.” (Umeå University, 2008) Visitors to the 100 largest shopping centres in Sweden rank Strömpilen to the 11th place, leaving for instance NK in Stockholm on the 83rd place (Market, 2008).

As previously stated it is evident that shoppers at Strömpilen at the moment are given an option between bringing their own bag and paying for a paper bag. The plastic bags earlier offered for free in most of the shops have been replaced by paper bags and reusable (for example canvas) carrier bags. There is a fear amongst the shops that the introducing of a fee for the bags that earlier has been given out for free with a purchase could have a negative impact on sales. The executives at Strömpilen have suggested that a follow-up should be made in order to evaluate whether the initiative has been beneficial and should be maintained for the future. Just as it has been learned that many companies address CSR related issues on their web sites, a quick glimpse at the web site of Strömpilen provides ample attestation that Strömpilen has chosen to inform their visitors about their ongoing project.

Reinhardt (1998) emphasises that instead of discussing whether it is beneficial or not for a company to Go Green, we ought to ask under which conditions it is beneficial for a company to do so. The author further argues; “In order to succeed in deriving competitive advantage from environmental concern, firms need to create a value and then capture it from customers, suppliers, or other economic agents.” (Reinhardt, 1998:44) Externalities such as for example pollution and environmental degradation provide a cost for the environment, however, these types of cost are not reflected in market
prices. In many cases, companies do not take these costs into account unless there are no regulations that apply to the matter.

### 1.1.1 Gaining a deeper understanding

To better grasp why Strömpilen took this *no plastic bags* initiative, we had continuous discussions with Ann Werner, the manager of Strömpilen. Ann Werner said that the initiative is part of an ongoing brand building process that fits to their CSR profile established in 2005. Continuing we were informed that it is naturally a part of increasing their goodwill as well as it is highly correlated to trade issues – “*it connects with what we do; our core activities*” (own translation). Ann Werner recognises that by introducing this concept Strömpilen is making the choice for the annual three million customers, thus giving the customer no option but to bring their own bag or pay for a paper bag. Ann Werner told us that it has been well received by their customers and that this could perhaps be because it fits the inhabitants of Umeå in a good way. Discussing the risks that Strömpilen dealt with prior to the launch of the initiative, Ann Werner said that the most predominant one was the risk towards the customers and how the initiative would be received by the respective companies head quarters. Future expectations was said to be establishing an attractive destination – the Strömpilen shopping centre, strengthening the brand and thereby increasing the goodwill.

Since Umeå municipality is part of the *no plastic bags* initiative, we talked to one of their representatives Royne Söderström. He told us that they have been involved in the process of composing this initiative. Continuing he said that Umeå municipality is very positive as they believe that it is “*breaking new ground for a sustainable shopping centre*” (own translation). He also said that traffic and thus the pollution it generates can be a problem for a shopping centre and the fact that Strömpilen by its *no plastic bags* initiative actually is doing something for the environment. The advantage with the initiative said Royne Söderström, is the immediate effect it has on lowering consumption of plastic bags. Another aspect, he added, is that consumers’ get more conscious in relation to the environment.

### 1.1.2 Elucidations

Relating the concept of CSR to our study one can argue that Strömpilen’s decision to stop offering plastic bags to their consumers can be seen as a CSR initiative in the sense that they want to decrease the level of environmental damage that follows from their activity. This is done by replacing the plastic bags with more environmentally friendly alternatives and in time influence consumers to choose biodegradable bags. Thus, our focus in this study is the environmental aspects of CSR. As we previously explained this subcategory to CSR relates to for example environmentally friendly products and pollution control, topics that could easily be *subtracted* from Strömpilen’s ongoing project – the *no plastic bags* initiative. Therefore, when looking into different theories we will solely consider the environmental perspective of CSR.

Let us recall the earlier presented European Commission definition of CSR: “...*a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis*” (europa.eu)

The essence of this definition connects to our study, combining the environmental standpoint that Strömpilen has taken which ultimately will affect their stakeholders. From here on it is important to understand that whenever we discuss the company Strömpilen we are referring to the organisation Strömpilen – Strömpilen as a shopping centre. The reason for this is that Strömpilen consists of sev-
eral companies which together form an organisation. Thus, company and organisation/shopping centre will be used interchangeably throughout the thesis as Strömpilen is not a company per se.

Continuing, stakeholders (or interested parties) in the above mentioned definition can have several different meanings and thus is of need to be clarified. It has already been established by Bhattacharya and Sen (2004), that first and foremost customers are sensitive to firms’ motives to CSR activities. Jobber and Fahy (2006) introduce a figure titled an organization and its publics which could be seen as a starting point for us in establishing the stakeholders to Strömpilen. Based on the short conversations mentioned above, which can at this point be identified as some of the different stakeholders to Strömpilen, we introduce the following model:

Figure 1:1 An organisation and its publics (Jobber and Fahy, 2006:243, revised)

From this model one should keep in mind that it might not fully capture all possible stakeholders to Strömpilen. However, this is done intentionally as the stakeholders above are the ones identified to be involved in the no plastic bags initiative. Ultimately it is beyond the scope of this study to include all the different stakeholders and as the magnifying glass in the model below depicts, the focus of our study is the consumers at Strömpilen, which is the customers/general public.

Figure 1:2 An organisation and its publics (Jobber and Fahy, 2006:243, revised)
Milton Friedman once said that a business only has one responsibility; “...to use it resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits...” (Friedman, 1970:178) What Friedman emphasised was that the corporate executive has obligations towards the owners of the company and therefore should not deal with environmental issues as then “…the corporate executive would be spending someone else’s money for a general social interest” (Friedman, 1970:174). Are his statements from the 1970s valid today?

1.2 Research problem
As mentioned earlier, environmental issues are one of the main social concerns of today. Consumers have gradually become more aware of this and demand a higher rate of social responsibility from companies. A company’s commitment to social responsibility has become a competitive factor to the traditional determinants of consumer purchase decisions such as price and quality. Therefore, we argue that a positively perceived environmental initiative can be a key factor for company success. From existing literature it has been found that one of the main aspects influencing the success of CSR initiatives are the consumer attitudes. In order to gain positive consumer attitudes towards an environmental initiative we need to investigate what factors are likely to affect their attitudes. This leads us to the following research question:

What factors affect consumer attitudes of an environmental corporate social responsibility (CSR) approach?

In order to answer this research question we will investigate different functions of attitudes and aim to establish the factors likely to have an impact on these.

1.3 Purpose
The purpose of this study is to evaluate the aspects that are relevant to consider when implementing an environmental approach in a business context. To accomplish this we have divided the purpose into the following sub-purposes.

- To find out how the environmental initiative (explicitly the no plastic bags initiative) has been perceived by customers.
- To investigate factors that can affect consumer attitudes positively or negatively.
- To develop a model based upon the theoretical framework and evaluate it.
- To determine how the initiative should be carried out in order to obtain a positive development.

Additionally we aspire to provide examples based on our findings of possible important factors to consider for successful implementation of environmental CSR strategies.

1.4 Choice of subject
While many of our fellow students have chosen a more strictly academic approach, we decided that we wanted take the opportunity to apply our theoretical skills to a real life situation. Through the Umeå University database (examensjobb.nu), via the Department of External Relations, we found an interesting assignment for Strömpilen, which has previously been discussed; that we also felt suited our educational background. The up-to-datedness of the topic and the chance to contribute to the ongoing evaluation of the no plastic bags initiative appealed to us.
1.4.1 Writing on assignment
The general opinion seems to be that writing on assignment can at times be complicated, as the requirements from the company and the academic institution may collide. Fortunately, we were given an assignment with loose boundaries; thus giving us freedom to develop it to fit into the academic prerequisites.

1.5 Limitations
The focus of this study is solely on Strömpilen. What this entails is that it will not be possible to apply our findings directly to other contexts. This is due to the fact that this study is performed on assignment for Strömpilen and thus it is not our primary interest to generate universal findings. The findings are context-specific in another way as well; we cannot disregard the possibility that the attitudes of inhabitants of Umeå are different from the attitudes held by inhabitants of other cities, countries etcetera.
2 Preconceptions
We find it important to be aware of the role that our own background and perspective plays in the research process as this can have bearings on the final study. Accordingly we also want to discuss the perspective of the thesis in order to provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the starting points of this study.

2.1 Perspective of the thesis
This thesis can be said to constitute a mixture of two worlds, or two different perspectives on research. On the one hand the perspective is an academic one since it is a part of a course at Umeå University. On the other hand the perspective is a managerial one since the study is conducted on assignment. This mixture entails constant considerations in order to keep the balance and not let one part take overhand.

2.2 The authors’ preconceptions
It is important to explain what personal experiences the writers have in order to give the reader a chance to reflect on the different backgrounds of the writers and the impact this might have on the subject studied.

In Kreuger and Neuman (2006:5) it is explained that “sometimes people believe what they see or experience rather than what is revealed by careful research designed to avoid such errors.” The authors put forward four errors of personal experience: overgeneralization, selective observation, premature closure and the halo effect. Overgeneralization is the effect that is the most predominant. It relates to simply giving one cause prevalence over others for the wrong reasons. Under certain situations limited generalizing might be appropriate but far from every time. The second common error is selective observation which could be having one idea in mind and then making sure that the observations fit that description. The third error, premature closure, concerns the ability to jump to conclusions to fast thereby missing important information. The halo effect, the final error, glorifies by assumption; for example a report from a prestigious university is regarded as better because it is believed that the authors behind it must be smart and talented, whereas no such assumptions is made of a report from an unknown university.

Our different backgrounds and experiences presented below provide an excellent opportunity for teamwork; teamwork that will be helpful in conducting the research at hand. We are both students at the International Business Program. Besides having studied within the fields of business administration, statistics and economics we have adopted different areas at advanced levels. Linnéa has chosen to study finance and marketing whereas Peter has chosen to study accounting and economics. Even though our academic backgrounds differ slightly the courses we have chosen to study are all within the same faculty; social science and for the most part within the same department; business administration.

Since both have extensive travelling experiences it is natural for us to take on a global perspective. We have witnessed the effects of our unsustainable lifestyle and seen the alternatives that there are to our western way of life. Of interest is Peter’s travelling in Asia and Linnéas experiences of Latin America.

Combining our different backgrounds and knowledge we feel that we complement each other very well. Linnéa has gotten good chances to practice market surveys both throughout her working ex-
perience and from studying marketing. Peter, on the other hand, with emphasis of studying statistics and economics has dealt a lot with data analysis; particularly with SPSS. Thus, we both feel that performing statistical tests and data collection is something that we have adequate skills doing.
3 Theoretical method
To further improve the readers’ understanding of the foundations of this thesis we would like to pro-
vide you with an account of our view of knowledge and our research strategy. Since we want to in-
crease the transparency of our study and to facilitate controls of our sources and quotations this
section is concluded with a description of our literature search and our reference system.

3.1 View of knowledge
Sikes and Goodson (2003) as put forward by Sikes (2004) proposes that no research paper is the
other one alike; that there are numerous ways of conducting research when it comes to deciding on
methodologies and procedures to follow. To quote: “This means that most research topics could be
approached from a range of different theoretical and philosophical positions and investigated by us-
ing most of the available methodologies and procedures.” (Sikes, 2004:18)

It is vital to argue about the nature of social reality. This construct is identified as ontological
considerations. Is the social reality “...given and objectively real...” or is it “...subjectively experienced and
the result of human thought...”? (Sikes, 2004:20) That is, objectivism and constructionism (Bryman,
2004:16). The author suggests that according to objectivists social phenomena exist independently of
the individuals. As an example of a social phenomenon the concept of an organisation is given. The
organisation exists with pre-given rules, routines and perhaps hierarchies. If this is true it would
mean that interactions between individuals would not affect the social construct. Constructionism on
the other hand finds its fundamentals in that social interaction between individuals creates social phe-
nomena, that are therefore constantly being revised (Bryman 2004:16-17). Since we believe that it is
possible to observe the behaviour of consumers and draw inference from it we feel inclined to agree
with the objectivistic ontological view.

In accordance with Opie (2004:13) we believe that the matter that influences the writer the most is
the view of knowledge one has; ones epistemology. Therefore our intention here is to clarify to the
reader the views that we have on the concept of knowledge. We feel strongly connected to the em-
piricist’s view (positivism) rather than to the rationalist’s view (interpretivism) which are the two
fields of epistemology. The reason is that this view as Bryman (2004) puts it relates more towards
natural science and hard facts. Opie (2004) elucidates that an empiricist’s view of knowledge is re-
garded as much harder and real in comparison to the rationalist’s view of knowledge which is con-
sidered as soft, subjective and based on experience. Thus, empiricist’s categorize knowledge that can
be observed. Opie (2004) continues by stating that a person sharing this view is considered a positiv-
ist, objectivist. Rationalist’s, on the other hand, see knowledge in relation to the mind of the be-
holder, giving the person an anti-positivist, interpretivist, subjectivist identity (Opie, 2004). This re-
 minds us of the common Latin proverb Cogito, ergo sum (I think, therefore I am). This view does not
appeal to us as we see it as relatively philosophical and blurry.

Like Marsh and Furlong (2002:21) we strongly believe that epistemology and ontology cannot be
changed as one goes from one research to another. As we have argued for we are inclined to agree
with the ontological objectivistic view and the epistemological positivistic view.

3.2 Research strategy
Whichever standpoint the writer uses; positivism versus interpretivism and objectivism versus con-
structionism, they relate to different strategies: quantitative and qualitative. We have already argued
for adhering to the objectivistic and positivistic views. Since we have done so a quantitative study is, as it will be explained in practical method (chapter 5), the type of study that would be considered to be the most suitable. We believe that the world can be observed and data can be collected and quantified in much the same way as it is done in natural science. Bryman (2004) argues for this view as he states that the quantitative approach often is correlated with objectivism and positivism.

3.3 Literature search and criticism

The theories, upon which our study is based, can be considered as a melting pot. We started off by selecting a fundamental theory, the functional theory on attitudes, which we gradually extended by adding various theories that we felt enriched this theory by adding further dimensions. This might not be the most prominent approach, however we felt that this would give our thesis a unique characteristic and provide new insights into the topic studied.

The Umeå University Library with its database ALBUM has proven to be a very useful source of information. Besides giving access to plenty of books, the library’s resources gave access to the worldwide databases Business Source Premiere (EBSCO) and Emerald Fulltext. Whenever looking for new articles we tried to limit ourselves only to peer-reviewed ones. To investigate the actuality of the chosen subject we have used Google. We searched for articles within the fields of corporate social responsibility, consumer behaviour and attitudes, marketing strategies, environmental differentiation, plastic bags etc. Narrowing down the different sources of literature, we have mainly used books to conduct the methodological section. In the process of designing the survey we also used the Statistics Sweden agency webpage. For the theoretical section we have used a mix of books and articles, in order to create a good mix between fundamental theories and more recent researches. Furthermore, we found that a good way to find new sources of information was to look at references used throughout different articles.

It should be noted that we have mainly used the same databases when searching for information. However, the databases used are frequently used amongst researchers and covers a great diversity of business topics. Although we strived only to use articles published within the recent years, some older sources have been used. However, all articles included have been deemed as relevant for the study.

3.3.1 Reference system

There are two dominant methods of referencing; the Oxford method and the Harvard method. According to the Oxford method of referencing each source is assigned a footnote at the bottom of the page. When using the Harvard method on the other hand the sources are referenced in a parenthesis directly after it has been used. Although the Oxford way enables you to include more extensive information about the source we simply feel more comfortable using the Harvard way. Perhaps this is simply due to old habits. We are however under the impression that this method of referencing is more facilitating for the reader, as you are not distracted from the text when wanting to know the source. Throughout the text we provide you with the name of the author(s) and the year of the publication, where needed we also add the page-reference. For example, Marsh and Furlong (2002:21) means that the information in question is by the authors Marsh and Furlong and published in 2002 on page 21.
4 Theory

The theories play a vital part in an academic thesis. Without theory we would have nothing to support the findings with and no means to explain them. As the main focus in this particular thesis is on consumer attitudes naturally this is the theme for the bulk of the theoretical framework.

4.1 The influence of attitudes

The aim of this chapter is to support the selected theories. Consumer attitudes makes up a crucial part of the selected theories for this study, therefore we believe that it is helpful to first explain the concept of attitudes, before introducing the theoretical base for the study.

4.1.1 What is an attitude?

According to Solomon (2006) firms exist to satisfy the needs of consumers. In order to be successful it is therefore crucial for firms to understand the consumers. The concept of consumer behaviour includes various subjects; one of these is consumer attitudes. To form a precise definition that includes all aspects of an attitude can be complicated; therefore we have used two descriptions from well known authors within the subject of consumer behaviour to describe the concept.

Solomon (2006:234) describes an attitude as “…a lasting, general evaluation of people (including oneself), objects, advertisements, or issues”. Whereas according to Hoyer and Maclnnis (2004:130) an attitude is defined as “A relatively global and enduring evaluation of an object, issue, person, or action” and continue to further explain that an attitude can be seen as an overall evaluation of something, which is based on a set of associations that we link to it. This description can also be used to explain why people have attitudes towards companies, brands, products, stores etcetera.

Based on these two descriptions it is possible to gain some understanding of the concept. It can be agreed that an attitude can be explained as a general evaluation of something, which is based on linked associations. The part about the life time can be further discussed since how long time period lasting or enduring refers to is hard to define. According to Hoyer and Maclnnis (2004) how long an attitude lasts, or the attitude persistence, is one of five main characteristics on which an attitude can be measured. The other four characteristics can be shortly described as; favourability – the degree of liking or disliking a person holds for something, accessibility – how easily an attitude is remembered, confidence – how strongly it is held and resistance – how difficult it is to change.

Lasting or enduring in the definition will rather refer to a combination of persistence and resistance. It is important to understand that since an attitude is based upon various associations, it is not likely to change without some kind of influence or stimulation. (Hoyer and Maclnnis 2004). However, this will be further explained and discussed later on in the thesis.

4.1.2 Why do attitudes matter?

Based on our attitudes we make decisions about all different things in our surroundings, such as; where to eat, whom to talk to, what to buy etcetera. Attitudes play an important role for people’s decisions including consumers’ purchase decisions; hence it is crucial for marketers to understand the importance of attitudes in order to affect consumers purchase behaviour (Hoyer and Maclnnis 2004).

Attitudes can affect people in different ways. Hoyer and Maclnnis (2004) state that there are three main impacts of attitudes on people: our feelings (affective), our behaviour (behavioural) and our
thoughts (cognitive). It is important to remember that it is not uncommon that these components are sometimes interrelated. The interrelationship between a person’s feelings, behaviour and thoughts is sometimes referred to as the ABC model of attitudes. However, it is not of great relevance to this study to go deeper into the subject of the ABC model, therefore we settle for a very shortened and simplified explanation which states that the different components may affect each other. For example, our feelings can affect our thoughts, or our thoughts may affect our feelings, our behaviour can affect our thoughts etcetera.

This is important to keep in mind when trying to understand how attitudes are formed and change, which in turn is relevant for a company that wishes to create a positive image and long-term consumer relationships.

4.1.3 How attitudes are formed and changed

In order to influence consumers’ attitudes toward a new product or offering it is important for marketers to understand the way attitudes are initially formed. This understanding is also essential for companies that wish to change consumer attitudes towards an already existing product or offering (Hoyer and Maclnnis 2004). Depending on what characteristics the attitude has and what the attitude is based on the challenge for a company may vary significantly. For example, a person’s attitude about an object can be based upon thoughts (cognitions) and beliefs about this specific object. In turn, a person’s thoughts might have been developed based on information received from an external source (such as a friend, a sales person, advertising, media etcetera) or on information evoked from the person’s own memory. However, an attitude may also be based on emotions. This means that a person’s positive attitude towards something (for example a product or a service) can sometimes be based simply on the fact that it gives her, or him, a good feeling or a feeling of being right (Hoyer and Maclnnis 2004). To conclude, the important part is not only to identify what attitude is held by consumers, but also why they hold it and how it has been formed. Understanding these factors simplifies the process of forming a strategy of how to create positive consumer attitude towards a company, or respectively, change an existing negative consumer attitude towards a company.

However, it is important to keep in mind the fact that a person does not necessarily base her/his attitude towards an object on her/his own feelings but on the observation of another person with experience of the particular object (Hoyer and Maclnnis 2004).

4.1.4 The functional theory of attitudes

The functional theory of attitudes was developed by Daniel Katz and explains how people’s attitudes can influence their social behaviour. This theory can be used to gain deeper understanding of how people may act in certain ways depending on their attitudes. (Solomon, 2006).

The theory states that attitudes are determined by a person’s motives and exist because they serve a function. In addition, it explains that consumers are more likely to form attitudes towards an event if they expect to find themselves in a similar situation again. Why a person has a specific attitude towards something may depend upon very different factors. For companies to be able to change consumer attitudes it is therefore helpful to understand why an attitude is held. According to the functional theory of attitudes described in Solomon (2006) attitudes can serve four different functions to consumers:
**The Utilitarian function:** This function is related to the basic theories of reward and punishment. According to this theory people base their attitude towards an object based on whether it provides the person with pleasure or pain.

**The Value-Expressive function:** In this case a consumer’s attitude expresses his/her central values or self-concept. The consumer forms an attitude about a product based on what the product says about him/her as a person rather than as a consequence of the products benefits.

**The Ego-Defensive function:** This function explains how people form attitudes with the intention to protect themselves from external threats or internal feelings. This can be more or less anything, such as avoiding certain food because it may contain unhealthy ingredients or using deodorant to protect oneself from the embarrassment of smelling badly.

**The Knowledge function:** Some attitudes are formed because people have the need for structure, meaning or order. This need often arises when a person finds her-/himself in an uncertain situation or is offered a new product.

An attitude can also provide more than one function, in such cases it is relevant to identify which function that is dominant and what benefits this function provides for the consumer, in order to focus on these benefits when forming a marketing strategy for the product or service in question (Solomon, 2006:234-235).

Relating this to the case of Strömpilen, understanding the different functions of attitudes can be helpful when analyzing our results, since it makes it possible for us to draw conclusions on why consumers have certain attitudes about Strömpilen shopping mall and the no plastic bags initiative and what associations these attitudes are based upon. In order to analyse the consumer attitudes of Strömpilen we have looked deeper into factors that are likely to affect the different functions of attitudes in the following sections.

### 4.2 The Utilitarian function

As earlier explained, the utilitarian function refers to the level of reward of punishment a consumer perceives from a product. Since theories in general discuss consumers’ relationship to a product it is important to keep in mind that the case of Strömpilen and the no plastic bags concept differs in the sense that it does not simply treat the product, which would be referred to as the bags, but rather the bags as part of the experience or service perceived when shopping at Strömpilen. To explain this further, the consumers’ main purpose when visiting Strömpilen is not to buy bags, but to shop for other items. Hence, the bags can be seen as a part of the store’s service, rather than simply a product. Before the introduction of the no plastic bags concept, bags were offered to customers without any additional charge and could then be seen as a premium offered to customers as part of the service. However, this is no longer the case. Customers now have the option to pay for the bag or simply to skip the bag. Hence, the utilitarian function of attitudes in this case refers to consumers’ level of satisfaction related to this particular part of the service perceived when shopping at Strömpilen. Before the no plastic bags concept was formed consumers where offered a bag for free every time they bought an item from one of the stores at Strömpilen without any extra charges. Consumers’ level of satisfaction in this case could hence be affected by the no plastic bags concept in the sense that a part of the service at Strömpilen has now been removed and can only be received at an additional cost. Therefore, consumers have an opportunity to avoid the additional monetary cost. However,
cost is not necessarily measured by a price increase, but could also be measured as decrease in quality or convenience. Consequently, the level of satisfaction of the service after the no plastic bags concept was undertaken, is not simply affected by the difference in price, but could also be affected by other factors, such as change in quality or change in convenience.

4.2.1 The impact of price premiums
In the background it is explained how CSR initiatives can be used as part of a differentiation strategy and how companies can benefit from this. Changes of the product or production process may raise the costs of a company, however, this creates an opportunity for the company to motivate premium prices, or obtain additional market share. The subject of companies charging premium prices for environmental quality has been widely discussed among researchers within the field (see for example Reinhardt, 1998, Coddington, 1993, Mohr and Webb, 2007 and Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004).

Coddington (1993:88-89) elucidates that when it concerns purchase considerations, consumers tend to have the standpoint that no extra cost should be added just because environmentally friendly producing and packaging actions have been considered. Expanding this belief, the author continues by saying that consumers still might have concerns about the environment but believe that companies should deal with it adding no extra cost to them. Finalising, Coddington (1993) explains that since consumers tend to be price-sensitive, expensive green products are judged as a competitive disadvantage, although; to which extent remains to be seen as it may differ from product to product.

The subject of how consumers respond to price increases as a direct consequence of companies’ social responsibility initiatives is also examined by Mohr and Webb (2005). Here the authors argue that CSR initiatives always include a certain amount of risk, since CSR initiatives may be costly and passing along the increased costs to consumers may result in a decrease in sales. However, Mohr and Webb (2005) also mention that although many consumers are price-sensitive this does not necessarily mean that price is consumers’ only preference when making their purchase decisions. Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) state that although most of the participants in their study were unwilling to pay more for a product based on the company’s socially responsible actions, some of the participants actually did acknowledge a willingness to pay more. According to the study consumers who strongly supported the issue of the company’s CSR actions were more likely to be willing to pay more. This once again supports the argument that it is important for a company to know their customers and their interests in order to reach success.

The experiments made in the study by Mohr and Webb (2005) showed that CSR actually had a stronger impact on consumers’ purchase intentions than price, especially pertaining environmental matters. The study also shows that consumers do not believe that a low price may compensate for a low level of social responsibility, which would indicate that consumers consider CSR as an important criterion when making purchase decisions.

4.2.2 Compromising product attributes
As mentioned before, the cost of trying to improve a product’s environmental performance is not necessarily measured in price increase. Having to compromise other attributes of the product such as the quality or convenience of the product could also be considered a cost.

Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) are of the opinion that consumers must not be asked to pay a higher price as a consequence of the company’s social responsibility, but also state that there are other
conditions that need to be fulfilled in order to see a positive relationship between CSR and purchase behaviour such as a good fit between the company and the cause and that the product must be of high quality.

The study of Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) further show that although consumers seem to have a positive attitude towards CSR initiatives and says that it is a criterion in the purchase decision, they are unwilling to trade-off product quality or price for CSR. Furthermore, Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) argue that consumers may even penalize companies if they feel that CSR initiatives are performed at the expense of for example product quality or price. If consumers do not feel that a company’s CSR initiative contributes to the products improvement this might hurt the company’s sales.

Furthermore, consumers tend to be more sensitive to companies that act irresponsibly than to companies that act responsibly. That is, the negative effect of a company’s bad behaviour is likely to be larger than the positive effect of a company’s good behaviour. This can also be related to how a company’s CSR initiatives affect consumers’ perception of the quality of the company’s products (Bhattacharya and Sen 2004).

A research by Yoon and Gürhan-Canli (2004) shows that if companies CSR activities are perceived as positive by consumers their products will be believed to be of superior quality. The vice versa scenario holds; that if the CSR activities is perceived as negative consumers will automatically believe that the product is of poor quality.

Relating this to the case of Strömpilen and the utilitarian function of attitudes we find that one factor that is likely to affect consumers’ attitudes towards the no plastic bags concept is the perceived quality of the actual bag and the service experience connected to the bag. Hence, if consumers perceive the new bag as of low quality, low convenience or too expensive this will affect their attitudes towards the concept negatively. In contrast, if the change of the bags attributes are perceived as positive this will influence consumer attitudes towards the concept positively. Based on the above arguments we have formed the following assumption:

A1: There is a relationship between how the bags are perceived and the overall attitude of the no plastic bags concept.

4.3 The Value–Expressive function
As previously explained, the value-expressive function of attitudes describes that consumers sometimes form an attitude towards an object based on what it says about her/him as a person. In this case this would mean that consumers form an attitude towards Strömpilen and the no plastic bags concept based on what shopping on Strömpilen and supporting the initiative says about them as persons. In order for consumers to form a positive attitude towards the concept it is important that it supports (or is at least not contradicts) the personal image they wish to have. This can be related to theories of brand identity or consumer-company identification. In this context the ‘company’ in question refers to the shopping centre Strömpilen.

4.3.1 The importance of a positive brand identity and organisational image
In Wheeler (2006:6) the concept of brand identity is defined as; “the visual and verbal expression of a brand”. The author further explains that an effective brand identity is beneficial for all sorts of organisations whether they; operate in the public and private sectors, are large or small, newly enter-
ers or already established on the market etcetera, since there is a need for all organisations to differentiate themselves from competitors in order to gain a greater market share. A brand identity can serve various functions; communicate organisational values and beliefs, reassure consumers that the organisation is trustworthy, connect the organisation images and ideas, provide consistency over communication channels and serve as the thread for equity building over time.

A deeper dimension of this is given in Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) where the authors explain that individuals sometimes have a need to identify themselves and to develop a sense of attachment with organisations; consumer-company identification. According to this theory the identification with an organisation that is performing good deeds can be a source of contribution to a consumer’s self-esteem. Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) in Mohr and Webb (2007) argue that there is a high probability that consumers will identify with a company that provides them with a positive and meaningful image. In addition, consumers are more likely to be loyal to companies that they can identify themselves with and, as mentioned before, are also more likely to promote the company to others.

Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) also state that CSR is likely to have a positive effect on consumers’ willingness to talk positively about the company which they perceive as socially responsible. This can also be connected to the theory about consumer-company identification and a positive word of mouth is often one of the main outcomes from this.

Information about a company or its products that is transmitted directly from individuals to individuals can be referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM). Solomon (2006) highlights the importance of WOM and argues that the opinions of others may sometimes be an even stronger source of influence than one’s own opinions. Since the information is usually transmitted from someone the consumer know, it is often perceived as more trustworthy than information and recommendations obtained through traditional advertising. Another factor likely to have influence over purchasing decisions according to Perloff (2007:13) is related to what other people do.

Another valuable but less obvious outcome of the consumer-company identification and positive consumer attitudes is the resilience to negative information about the company which can be explained as “...consumers’ willingness to overlook or even forgive a company when there is an occasional [...] lapse on its part” (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004:19). The fact that consumers may be motivated to minimize negative information about a company that they believe is socially responsible is an important aspect for a company to consider when deciding whether to invest in CSR. To summarize we can say that if consumers feel that they can make a difference through supporting companies that engage in socially responsible actions this is likely to contribute to a long term positive attitude which, in turn, enhances consumer loyalty. For this reason, a good strategy for companies in order to keep their customers may be to find out what the customers believe in and keep supporting these issues (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004). However, since consumers need time to learn about a company’s social actions and companies need to earn the trust of consumers in order to build up this kind of positive consumer-company relationship, financial payoffs as a result of CSR is likely to take time (Mohr and Webb 2007). Hence, this gives us a hint that for a company that wishes to obtain financial success, CSR actions should be undertaken primarily as part of a long-term strategy.
Based on the above theories consumer attitudes towards Strömpilen and the no plastic bags concept is likely to vary depending on whether the environmental friendly image is consistent with the way consumers want to be perceived. Based on this a second assumption is formed:

A2: The more important environmental responsibility is to a consumer, the more positive her/his attitude towards the no plastic bags concept will be.

4.4 The Ego-Defensive function
As earlier explained, the ego-defensive function of attitudes explains how people may form an attitude towards something in order to defend themselves towards external threats or internal feelings.

4.4.1 Internal feelings – another aspect of the importance of image
A consumer’s wish to defend her-/himself towards internal feelings can be related to the theory of the value-expressive function. This part can be explained as the consumers need to avoid negative feelings about her/his own person and is closely related to values and beliefs about what is ‘good’ and what is ‘bad’. In relation to the case of Strömpilen or other environmental issues this could be a consumers need to feel that her/his behaviour is not environmentally harmful and to be able to feel good about her-/himself due to the fact that she/he is acting environmentally responsibly. Hence, the same factors influencing an attitude that is formed from the perspective of the value-expressive function of attitudes can influence an attitude formed based on the ego-defensive function, that is, the customer relationship and image of an organisation plays an important role also in this aspect. In the previous section it has been explained that; the identification with an organisation that is performing good deeds can be a source of contribution to a consumer’s self-esteem. From the perspective of the ego-defensive function this indicates that consumers does not necessarily support a company that they perceive as responsible in order to express opinion or valuation of something, but sometimes simply feel good about themselves because they believe that it is the right thing to do. Defending oneself against internal feelings could also treat the subject about a person’s concern for what others think of her/him in the sense that one might find comfort in acting in accordance to the norms of the society (or to any other group a person wish to feel belonging to).

4.4.2 External threats – the environment as a private good
The other aspect of the ego-defensive function is a consumers need to defend oneself towards external threats. This aspect is highly relevant for our case since the environment (as previously argued in the background) is one of today’s most commonly discussed external threats for humanity. Reinhardt (1998) argues that consumers’ willingness to pay premiums is high for goods they believe directly benefit their health. With this in mind one can also argue that the environment fits into this category as it can be considered to influence people’s health. However, Reinhardt (1998) highlights that environmental benefits differs from other benefits in the sense that it should be considered as a public good rather than a private good.

Reinhardt (1998) argues that environmental differentiation may be easier to succeed with since the environmental benefit is bundled with a more conventional private good, as the benefits then are more directly perceived by consumers (for example ecological food is sometimes being considered as more healthy than other food). However, Reinhardt (1998) continues to argue that there are some circumstances under which people are willing to pay private expenses to provide public goods. Recycling is a good example of this, as people put down both extra time and effort to recycle for environmental gains. Another example is donations to charity and social welfare organisations. These exam-
People indicate that there is a willingness to pay for public goods although no direct benefit is obtained to the individual. The reason individuals contribute to the provision of public goods could be that some find personal gains donating money to private goods, as this might provide them with prestige within a community, while others hope to affect the behaviour of others by being a good example. (Reinhardt, 1998). People who pay for public goods in order to gain prestige can be argued to have a need to defend themselves from a more indirect external threat, namely the thoughts of others, which can of course also be connected to the need to express value or opinion or as previously stated the need to defend oneself towards internal feelings. People who pay for public goods in order to affect the behaviour of others on the other hand, are probably more concerned about the actual external threat that comes for example from pollution and do what they can in order for the threat to be avoided.

Adding this into the context of the Strömpilen case and the no plastic bags concept a logical argument would be that people that are concerned about the environmental threat may want to contribute as much possible to the prevention of this. Hence, people who are concerned about the environmental threat in general should in accordance with this argument have a higher willingness to pay for environmental benefits than those not concerned about the environmental threat. This leads us to our third assumption:

A3: The more concerned a consumer is about environmental threats, the more positive she/he will be towards the no plastic bags concept.

4.5 The Knowledge function

As previously explained, the knowledge function of attitudes describes how people sometimes form attitudes towards an object based on their need for knowledge in order to obtain meaning, structure or order. In our case this can be referred to as consumers’ need to receive knowledge about the no plastic bags concept in order to understand the meaning of the concept. Our assumption is that what level of knowledge and understanding a consumer has about something is depending upon the amount of information she/he has received. Hence, the information provided to consumers is a potential factor of influence to what attitudes consumers will form about the concept.

4.5.1 The role of information

In the background, Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) and Gifford (1997) views were presented. It was learned that customers are sensitive to firms’ motives behind CSR activities and that companies need to realise the importance of informing the public about these activities by advertising, reports and web page publications. Coddington (1993:95-96) brings these views to a different level discussing consumers’ backlash (criticism) towards companies green marketing behaviour. The author lists three degrees of criticism, namely: 1) general scepticism, 2) claims or other issue controversy and finally 3) boycott. The first degree concerns consumers’ general scepticism; why has the company started with eco-friendly activities products? At this stage the business runs as usual. The second degree, claims or other issue controversy, concerns consumers’ reaction to the eco-friendly products performance. However, with marketing campaigns this initial criticism can be overturned. The third and final degree, boycott; occur when the companies’ behaviour is severely questioned. Then there is no alternative for the company but to change its way of conducting business.

Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) highlight the importance of consumer awareness. The findings from their study shows that many consumers are not even aware that companies perform CSR actions and
even if they are aware that a company is known to be socially responsible they do not necessarily know why. It is not uncommon that consumers question a company’s motives to undertake socially responsible actions. Due to this Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) argue that it is important for companies to provide consumers with information about their CSR actions.

Coddington (1993:97) suggests that source reductions, recyclability of packaging and long-term commitment to environment are essential matters about which consumers would like to know where the company stands.

Summarizing the theories presented above we have learned that when offering an environmentally friendly product to customers and even more importantly when taking out a premium cost for this product, it is important that consumers understand in which aspects the product is environmentally friendly. In what sense is the product different from similar products and what are the product attributes that makes it less environmentally harmful? If this information is missing, not clear or not credible enough, consumers will not be motivated to buy the environmentally friendly product (and paying a premium cost) in place of a similar product. (Reinhardt, 1998).

As most stores in Sweden offer bags for free to customers when buying the stores products, it is likely that some customers expect to be offered a bag for their products without extra charge. Due to this, some consumers may be caught by surprise when realizing that an additional charge is taken for bags and that store personnel encourages customers to skip the bag. If consumers do not understand the purpose of this concept, they will not feel that the concept is motivated which may lead to a negative reaction. Therefore, it is of great importance for Strömpilen to provide its customers with information of why the no plastic bags concept has been introduced and what the environmental gains of this will be.

4.5.2 The influence of public relations

It is known that information can be obtained in different ways. Public relations activities include several ways in which companies can provide consumers with information, such as corporate advertising and promotion, publications, seminars, publicity etcetera (Jobber and Fahy, 2006).

Two of the most common ways for consumers to receive information is perhaps through advertising and marketing respectively through media and publicity. These two means differ in several aspects and the effect of these means that consumer perceptions may differ depending on what mean information is received through. Below follows a further explanation of some aspects in relation to the case of Strömpilen and the no plastic bags initiative.

4.5.2.1 The effect of cause-related marketing on consumer responses

The ultimate objective of advertising is of course to stimulate sales and increase profit. However, advertising can also have communications objectives, such as creating awareness, sending out a message etcetera (Jobber and Fahy, 2006). Applying this to the case of Strömpilen and the no plastic bags concept a communication (in addition to increasing awareness and attracting customers) will be to inform consumers about the purpose of the concept. This can be further related to theories of cause-related marketing.

Nan and Heo (2007) illustrate how ads with cause-related marketing (CRM) messages form more positive attitudes among consumers towards a company than a similar ad without a CRM message. The definition of CRM in their study is adopted from Varandarajan and Menon (1998).
“The process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives.” (Nan and Heo, 2007:63)

Nan and Heo (2007) suggests that a company that uses CRM messages in their advertisement will receive more favourable consumer responses than a company that does not use such a message.

According to the findings of Nan and Heo (2007) the usage of a CRM message within an ad leads primarily to positive consumer attitudes towards the company rather than the attitudes towards the ad or the brand. Furthermore, the experiments performed in the study showed that the participants who were exposed to an ad containing a CRM message held a considerably more positive attitude toward the company than those exposed to a regular ad. This would imply that companies would benefit from the usage of CRM messages within their advertisement, since it enhances the overall image of the company and leads to positive consumer responses.

4.5.2.2 The effect of media and publicity

An alternative way for consumers to receive information about a company, its products and its policy is through publicity. Publicity makes up for a major part of public relations and can be explained as; a way for companies or organisations to communicate information to consumers through media without paying directly for the time or space. As this explanation indicates publicity differs from advertising in the sense there are no direct media costs since the company or organisation does not have to buy time or space for publicity. From a company or organisational perspective, a negative aspect in which publicity differs from advertising is the control aspect. Unlike advertising control over the message is missing and there is no guarantee of what will be published since the control now lies in the hands of the editor rather than the organisation. In order for media to find interest in the message and be willing to publish it, it requires the message to concern something newsworthy. Newsworthy items can for example be when a company is first with something, such as a new product or, as in the case of Strömpilen, a new concept. (Jobber and Fahy, 2006).

Both aspects presented above can be related to the argument that consumers often perceive messages communicated through publicity to have higher credibility than advertising messages, since they appear to be written independently of the company. Due to this aspect publicity message is often considered as more persuasive than a message obtained through advertisement.

Based on this, it is possible to draw the conclusion that not only what kind of information and how it is presented is relevant for what attitude consumers will form about the object in question, but also from what source the information is received. The above presented theories lead us to the forming of the following assumption:

A4: The more information a consumer has received about the no plastic bags concept, the more positive she/he will be.
4.6 Model of the theoretical framework

Based on the assumptions explained above we have conducted a model to summarise our theoretical framework.

Figure 4:1 Model of the theoretical framework
5 Practical method

This chapter continues where the theoretical method left off. How a market survey is carried out is explored and emphasis throughout this chapter lies within the designing of a survey. For introductory reasons a particular section have been devoted to a statistical methodology that was used extensively when analysing the collected data.

5.1 Market survey

So far we have argued that we will take a quantitative approach when conducting this study. At this stage we have reflected on our preconceptions and theoretical knowledge and understanding. There is also another side to this approach, namely of practical matters. According to Dahmström (2005:16) one of the purposes with a statistical study can be to conduct a descriptive research, for instance a market research carried out for a company, which is what we are doing.

Given the vast amounts of data we would receive if we would try to collect data by interviews (qualitative approach) it is clear that a quantitative study, were surveys/questionnaires would be distributed, collected and in the final step analysed is more appropriate. Another reason, perhaps more prominent, is that we want to be able to quantify our collected data and be able to draw conclusions that can be generalised. John (2002:218) bring in the fundamental aspect that quantitative studies, if carried out in a proper manner, by means of observing numerous variables researchers will be able to confidently make generalisations of the surrounding world. The author continues by stating that large numbers of observations bring the assurance that what is observed is not random variation.

We have chosen to conduct our study through the distribution of questionnaires. The choice comes naturally considering our choice of a quantitative approach. This method has other, more specific, advantages as well though and the first one to be mentioned is the low cost per respondent in comparison to interviews, both in terms of actual monetary costs and in terms of time. Connected to this is the fact that this approach allows the sample size to be big, something that is of utmost importance when intending to generalize the data. Another decisive advantage is that the questions in a questionnaire are standardised; everyone is answering the exact same set of questions, something that facilitates analyses and comparisons. (Ejlertsson, 2005:11).

There are then different ways of distributing the questionnaires. Today the web-questionnaire is becoming more and more frequently used as the use of the internet is rapidly increasing among consumers. There is also the mail-questionnaire, which as the name suggests is distributed via mail. Another alternative is the group-questionnaire, which is supposed to be answered by all members of a certain group. (Dahmström, 2005:76-77) For our purposes however the so called visitor-questionnaire is the most suitable type. The main advantage of this type over the web- and the post-types are that we, the deliverers of the questionnaire, are available nearby and prepared to answer any inquiries concerning the questions that the respondents may have.

5.2 Designing the survey – part 1

At this moment we would like to recall the purpose of this study: “...to evaluate the aspects that are relevant to consider when implementing an environmental approach in a business context.” It has already been established that in the progress of finding an answer to this purpose, the customers visiting the shopping centre Strömpilen will be targeted via so called visitor-questionnaires. The importance when drawing samples from this target population is that everyone should have the same
probability of being selected. There are different ways of doing this, of ensuring that in the end the sample collected will be a representative collection; a cross-section of the population. The way that we have chosen for this survey is the non-probability sampling method convenience sample. The characteristic with this method is that the respondents will be the ones that for some reason happen to be at the right place at the right time (Kent, 2007:235) and that it is a widely used research method in the fields of business and management.

When designing a survey it is important to keep in mind the different errors that might occur once the data is received, in order to try to minimize this risk when wording the questions etcetera. In quantitative studies reliability is of utmost importance. A study with high reliability has a small amount of random variation (Dahmström, 2005:334). This means that if the study is conducted repeatedly, each study will achieve the same results (Ejlertsson, 2005:99). According to John (2002:219) the real meaning of reliability is that the researcher should try not to influence the data collection in any manner. It also important that the questions really do measure what they are intended to measure. If this is in fact the case, then the survey has high validity. This is achieved by choosing parameters that are relevant and appropriate and that actually describe the variable in question (Dahmström, 2005:334). We will come back to this discussion in quality of the study (chapter 8).

As with any methodological strategy taken there are of course negative aspects involved. The prominent ones are those related to respondents declining to participate in the survey (nonresponse error) and in those cases that the respondent does not answer all the different questions (errors in data acquisitions). Having said this many of the disadvantages regarding the use of questionnaires can be overcome by careful planning and structuring of the survey. (Ejlertsson, 2005:12-13)

Sources such as SCB (2001 and 2007), Ejlertsson (2005) and Dahmström (2005) was accessed numerous times during the development of the questionnaire. Common for these references is that they cover important aspects of designing a questionnaire. Why is asking the right questions important? SCB (2007:24) draw attention to the idiom “trash in, trash out” meaning that if the collected data is bad it would imply that the analysis will have flaws. As one realises; carefully worded questions aimed at the target populations is of fundamental importance. SCB (2007) continues saying that if a question is open for different interpretations it will be hard not only to interpret the answers but also in the worst case scenario, to include that question in the analysis. Our ambition during the designing of the questionnaires has been to account for the different aspects, positive as well as negative, and this way end up with well functioning surveys. A few of these aspects could be questions related to time, not having leading questions, asking one question at a time as well as avoiding ambiguous answer alternatives. (Ejlertsson, 2005).

5.2.1 Pilot-study

After carefully designing the questionnaire, a pilot-study was performed on Tuesday, 10 March 2009 between 11:30 AM and 2 PM. The pilot-study was carried out in accordance with both Ejlertsson (2005:35-38) and Dahmström (2005:143-145) who recognizes the importance of testing a questionnaire prior to conducting the actual research. The authors explain that a pilot-study is necessary because a questionnaire might not be interpreted in the same way as the researchers believe it would be and thereby render doubtful answers. From the pilot-study the researcher will be able to receive feedback and suggestions for improvements. Perhaps are some questions unnecessary whereas oth-
ers would need some more considerations? (Ejlertsson, 2005 and Dahmström, 2005). At an early stage we came to the understanding that a few questions was hard for the respondents to understand and a more clear layout had to be constructed. This was implemented in the final version which then was tested on a few of our friends. The positive aspect of this last stage of finalizing the questionnaire is that we could receive direct feedback. Thus, at that stage we felt confident that we had a well formulated questionnaire that would serve its purpose.

5.3 Designing the survey – part 2
The final version of the questionnaire consists of 18 questions in total. The questions have been arranged to come in a logical order to the respondents, rather than to strictly follow the theoretical framework. However, the questionnaire can be divided into different sections in order to understand their connection to theory. Below follows a scheme of how the different questions are related to the theory and how they will be used in the analysis.

**Indicators of attitudes towards Strömpilen and the no plastic bags concept**

- Attitudes towards Strömpilen in general  
  Question 2
- Attitude towards the concept  
  Question 4
- Support of maintenance of the concept  
  Question 16

Question 2 will be used to measure the consumer attitudes towards the overall performance of Strömpilen as a shopping centre. Consumer attitudes towards the no plastic bags concept and what factors that may affect these is the main area of interest for this study. Therefore, question 4 will be tested against several different variables in order to establish the variables that are related to this question. Question 16 will be used mainly to test consistency in consumer answers. Logically, a consumer who is positive towards the concept should answer positively on this question and a consumer who is negative should answer negatively.

- Question 4 → various questions (impact of different factors on attitude towards the concept).
- Question 4 → Question 2 (impact of attitude towards concept on attitude towards Strömpilen).
- Question 16 - Question 4 (evaluate consistency in answers).

**Descriptive variables**

- Patronage  
  Question 1
- Importance of eligibility  
  Question 9
- Consumers own choice  
  Question 10

Questions 1, 9 and 10 will be used to enable discussion by describing the situation.

**The Utilitarian function - Impact of price premiums and compromising of product attributes**

- Importance of price  
  Question 5
- Willingness to pay price premiums for environmental attributes  
  Question 6
- Importance of product attributes  
  Question 8
Attitude towards the paper bags ----------------------------------------------- Question 7

The relationship between question 5 and question 7 will be tested to evaluate how price premiums affect consumer attitudes towards the paper bags. Question 6 gives us the opportunity to evaluate whether the environmental aspect of the price premium is of importance for consumers’ attitudes towards price premiums. Question 8 will be tested against question 7 in order to find out whether consumer perceptions of the different product attributes influence their attitude towards the paper bags. As stated in the first assumption, we assume that the attitude towards the paper bags will be related to the attitude towards the concept. In order to evaluate this we will test whether question 7 is related to question 4.

Question 5 → Question 7 (impact of price premium on attitude towards bags)

Question 6 (evaluate impact of willingness to pay for environmental attributes)

Question 8 → Question 7 (impact of different product attributes on attitude towards bags)

Question 7 → Question 4 (assumption 1)

The Value-Expressive function - Importance of brand identity and brand image

Importance of individual responsibility -------------------------------- Question 11

Importance of corporate social responsibility ----------------------------- Question 12

Both the relationships between question 11 and question 4, and question 12 and question 4 will be investigated in order to evaluate whether our second assumption, which states that consumers whom find environmental responsibility important more positive towards the concept than consumers whom are engaged to the debate. Furthermore, we will also test the relationship between question 12 and question 11 to check consistency of answers. This test can also be connected to assumption 2 and will mainly be seen as an additional base for evaluation and a way to test the consistency in consumer responses.

Question 11 → Question 4 (assumption 2)

Question 12 → Question 4 (assumption 2)

Question 11 → Question 12 (support for assumption 2, consistency in answers)

The Ego-Defensive function - The environment as a private good

Concern about the impact of the environmental problem on future life----------- Question 13

The impact of plastic bags on the environment----------------------------------- Question 14

Both the relationships between question 13 and question 4, and question 14 and question 4 will be tested to evaluate our third assumption. Both of these questions can be related to the theory of the environment as an external threat. Question 13 will be used as the main variable to test, whether the extent to which consumers see environmental problems as a threat to the individual has an impact on their attitude towards the concept. However, we saw a possibility that although some consumers might see the environment as a threat this does not necessarily mean that they believe that the use of plastic bags is a reason for concern. Therefore we decided to include a more specific variable,
question 14, to evaluate whether or not the consumers find the usage of plastic bags to be a threat to the environment.

Question 13 → Question 4 (assumption 3)

Question 14 → Question 4 (support for assumption 3, consistency in answers)

**The Knowledge function - Importance of information**

Amount of information received

Sources of information

Credibility of information

These questions can be related to the theories concerning the role of information and the knowledge function of attitudes. Question 3 will be analysed in two different ways. First, we will use this to measure the amount of information received. The amount of information received from each source is graded by an ordinal scale from 0 to 2 where 0 is equal to the alternative “no”, 1 is equal to “little” and 2 is equal to “a lot”. By adding the selected option connected to each source we will get a number that will be used as evaluation of the amount of information. A high number represents a high level of received information while a low number represents a low amount of received information. Together the numbers will form a scale from 0 to 12. Hence, if the respondent answers that she/he has received “a lot” of information from all of the six information sources presented in question 3, the number will be 12 which represent the highest possible amount of information received of the scale. In contrast, if the respondent answers that she/he has received “none” information from all of the information sources represented the sum will add up to 0 which, naturally, represents the lowest possible amount of information received on the scale. To test our fourth assumption the amount of information received, question 3, will be measured against the consumers attitude towards the concept, question 4. A second aspect of how we will use question 3 is to evaluate from which information channels consumers have received information. Question 15 will be used as a reference to how relevant consumers believe the concept is. This will be used as an indicator for how credible the information is. Furthermore, question 15 will be measured against question 4 to see if the perceived credibility of information is of importance for the consumer’s attitude towards the concept.

Question 3 → question 4 (assumption 4)

Question 4 → question 15 (consistency in answers)

**Demographics**

Gender

Age

As our aim is not to evaluate differences among different groups we have chosen not to include many demographical variables in the questionnaire. However, we found it relevant to include gender and age in order to make sure that our sample contained respondents from different groups.
5.4 Distributing the survey

Prior to the distributing the final version of the questionnaire a few more aspects needed to be considered. For example, if we would distribute our questionnaires only during the morning we figure that very few consumers present at Strömpilen would be from the working part of the population. We also find it more likely for a young girl to be visiting Vero Moda than an old man whereas the consumers visiting Systembolaget obviously cannot be under 20 years of age. Taking these different aspects into consideration, what then would be the best alternative? After having reasoned quite a lot and with support from Strömpilen, it was decided that we would carry out our survey on Saturday, 14 March 2009 between 12 PM and 3:30 PM. The reason for choosing a Saturday was that it would be a lot easier for us to obtain an adequate number of respondents. This is in line with the non-probability sampling method convenience sampling. The questionnaires were handed out inside the shopping centre, in a location where most of the visitors would pass through during their visit. Another reason for standing inside is the Swedish winter weather and the presumably effect that it may have on the respondents willingness to participate in the study. It was also decided that we would provide coffee/lemonade and biscuits for our respondents, in order to attract respondents. Thus we set out to receive 100 questionnaires as this would provide us with large amounts of quantitative data which would be used to explore correlations between our different variables and enable us to give some answers to our purpose. Although, one could argue that providing coffee/lemonade and biscuits would give us a biased population we feel that this did not occur. In fact, far from everyone actually took that opportunity; many actually turned down the offer but still happily filled out the questionnaire.

5.5 Statistical tools

As stated previously we adhere to the positivistic views; there is a world out there from which we can collect data from, analyse and finally draw conclusions from. It should be remembered that one of our sub-purposes is to create a model. In order to test that model a number of statistical tools are needed. Why statistical tools? The purpose of this thesis allowed for the structuring of a questionnaire. A vast amount of data brings substance to the matter; it is important that we can present and analyse the collected data in an easy to grasp kind of way. This brings us to the presentation of data. As you soon will notice the next chapters´, presentation and analysis of empirical findings, main focus will be on **bar charts**. The reason for this is that it is a basic way of providing a descriptive yet powerful presentation. It makes it easier to grasp the large amount of data in a pedagogical way. As Wallgren et al. (1996:6) elucidate in regards to charts: It not only encourages assessment and analysis but it also “... give an immediate depiction of the differences and patterns in the set of data. The reader can see immediately where there are major differences or similarities without having to compare and interpret the figures himself.” Thus, a major section of the next chapter will be devoted to bar charts.

The charts will, as already hinted, encourage comparison. Let us recall our model that was developed from theory. To be able to test that model something more than plain bar charts are needed. Our initial plan was to apply Yates’s test for continuity correction as explained by Everitt (1977), to our data. This test is a variation of the perhaps more frequently used Chi-Square test and in general looks the same way. In our case, Yates’s was deemed the more suitable one as it is used with data in tables of two rows and two columns. However, from our questionnaire it should be evident that most of the questions did not qualify for this precondition, thus we had to recode the different variables by excluding **no opinion answers, neither positive nor negative answers** as well as regrouping some of
them. For instance: somewhat negative became negative whereas somewhat positive and very positive went into the category positive. The calculations brought a new dimension to our analysis; interesting results were found. Among these results was that our different assumptions was either proven or rejected. Below are the results from Yates’s test for continuity correction.

**Assumption 1** – developed from the Utilitarian Function – connection established

**Assumption 2** – developed from the Value-Expressive Function – connection established

**Assumption 3** – developed from the Ego-Defensive Function – connection partly established

**Assumption 4** – developed from the Knowledge Function – no connection established

Thus, our very own developed model could be proven in some aspects whereas in other aspects it did not seem to be valid. However, after consultation with the Department of Statistics, it was realised that perhaps the Yates’s test was not to full satisfaction. Its strength in comparison to the more frequently used Chi-Square test did not come to our rescue – the expected values in each cell was simply too small. Instead, it was suggested that we should re-code some of the different variables once again. The procedure was similar as the one explained above, with one major difference. Instead of removing the respondents that answered neither positive nor negative this group was re-grouped with the ones that had a negative answer, now forming the new group other. This is deemed more accurate as this type of answer, being neither positive nor negative, is actually a standpoint. By the same logic, the group of respondents that gave the answer no opinion were removed. Below is a figure that illustrates the re-coding procedure of the variables.

![Figure 5.1 Re-coding the questionnaire](image)

**5.5.1 Chi-Squared test**

With the new set of data and the information from Neter et al. (1993:487) that as long as the expected value of 50 percent of the cells is five or higher and the rest is two or above, a Chi-Square test is indeed the most appropriate. This was acknowledged by the Department of Statistics. The positive outcome of this was that the calculations now were able to be performed using the statistical software SPSS. Using a statistical software such as SPSS is more convenient than doing the calculations by hand and is perhaps more reliable. A general explanation of the Chi-Square test will be provided below:

The Chi-Square test is used to establish if there is strong evidence to conclude if two variables are related. The null hypothesis state that no relationship between the variables exists and the alternative hypothesis state that there is a relationship between the variables. (Keller, 2005:557-558).

\[ H_0: \text{the two variables are independent} \]

\[ H_1: \text{the two variables are dependent} \]
Important when determining the results obtained from the SPSS output in regards to the Chi-Square test is the p-value. In order to provide a straightforward overview of the p-Value, Keller’s (2005) description is adopted:

Overwhelming evidence (highly significant)  Strong evidence (significant)  Weak evidence (not significant)  No evidence (not significant)

Figure 5.2 p-Value (adopted from Keller, 2005:335)
6 Presentation and analysis of empirical findings

This chapter is divided into two different sections; based on general results and the functional theory of attitudes. The aim of the first section is to depict the answers of the respondents from a broader perspective. In the second section follows the analysis of the findings in relation to corresponding theories. As the title implies this chapter solely focuses on the empirical findings and the results from the statistical analysis. Further conclusions and discussion of these results will follow in the subsequent chapter.

6.1 General results

To get an overview of the data received we start by illustrating some of the results in general. When handling quantitative data it is quite easy to create large amounts of output, such as diagrams and tables in order to present the data, however, we have tried to limit the amount of data in order to keep it simple and easy for readers to grasp. After a general presentation of the data we will look closer into possible relationships between the different variables and results obtained from the Chi-Square tests as explained earlier in the practical method. To begin with we tested relationships between the variables connected to our four main assumptions. Furthermore, we performed some additional tests to cover other parts of our theoretical framework to find other factors that may be of influence to our results and to check consistency in the answers. The tests will be presented and analysed in relation to the different parts of the theory.

Our sample contained 100 respondents, of which 59 are women and 41 men. Of the respondents there are 40 under 25 years, 38 between 25 and 45 years, 20 between 46 and 65 years and 2 above 65 years. This shows that respondents from all groups are represented within the sample.

Bar chart 6:1 Attitude towards the shopping mall. 32 percent have a very positive attitude towards Strömpilen as a shopping mall. 53 percent are somewhat positive, 12 percent are neither positive nor negative, 1 percent is somewhat negative and 2 percent answered that they have no opinion. No respondents answered that they are very negative. We can see that the majority of the respondents have a positive attitude towards Strömpilen.

Bar chart 6:2 Frequency of visits. 3 percent answered that this was their first visit at Strömpilen. 24 percent visit Strömpilen less than once a month. 18 percent visit Strömpilen once a month and 32 percent visit Strömpilen two or three times a month. 23 percent visit Strömpilen weekly.
Bar chart 6:3 Attitude towards the concept. 50 percent are positive towards the no plastic bags initiative, 26 percent are somewhat positive and 6 percent are neither positive nor negative. 2 percent are somewhat negative and 4 percent very negative. 12 percent did not have an opinion. Thus, a majority of the respondents have a positive attitude towards the no plastic bags initiative.

Bar chart 6:4 Opinion of continuing the concept. 87 percent answered that Strömpilen should continue with the no plastic bags concept. 7 percent answered that the concept should not be continued and 6 percent did not have an opinion in the matter. As the figure depicts a clear majority of the respondents felt that Strömpilen should maintain the no plastic bags concept.

57 percent are positive to the fact that Strömpilen has taken away the plastic bags as an alternative for consumers, 24 percent are neither positive nor negative and 15 percent are negative. 4 percent have no opinion. This can be analysed in the context of Reinhardt (1998) whose views which are stated in the background. Companies that offer both environmentally friendly and non-environmentally friendly products can sometimes be considered less responsible than companies that have taken the decision to only offer environmentally friendly products. To see the bar chart see Appendix B2: Bart chart 6:5 Removing the plastic bags as an alternative.

57 percent answered that if they get to choose themselves, they prefer to use a textile bag or their own bag. 26 percent preferred to use a paper bag and 17 percent a plastic bag. Thus, this is a clear indication that the concept fulfils its purpose; only a minority of the respondents are inclined to use plastic bags. To see the bar chart see Appendix B2: Bar chart 6:6 Consumers own choice.

We find it logic that consumers who hold a positive attitude towards the no plastic bags concept would also be positive towards the maintaining of the concept. Therefore, we tested question 4 against question 16; attitude towards maintaining the concept, in order to find out whether answers were consistent. The results from the Chi-Square test show that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables are related and hence, we can confirm that the answers are consistent. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.
6.2 The functional theory of attitudes

6.2.1 The Utilitarian function

Bar chart 6.7 Attitude towards the paper bags. 18 percent think that the paper bags are very good, 45 percent that they are good, 13 percent that they are less good and 5 percent that they are bad. 19 percent had no opinion.

In order to test our first assumption “there is a relationship between how the bags are perceived and the overall attitude of the no plastic bags concept” we tested question 7: attitude towards the paper bags, against question 4: attitudes towards the concept (this question will be tested against several variables and thus, will from now on only be referred to as question 4). According to our results from the Chi-Square test there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables are related and hence, the assumption seems to be valid.

**SPSS output**

<table>
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<th>other</th>
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<th>Expected Count</th>
</tr>
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<td>Expected Count</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6:1 Assumption 1 – Chi-Square test

Since the p-value 0.000 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables attitude towards paper bags and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

In the theory chapter under the utilitarian function the influence of price premiums is discussed. The arguments on this differ among the different authors; some argue that price premiums will have a negative effect when undertaking an environmental initiative while others argue that many consumers will be willing to pay a higher price for environmental attributes. Based on this we found it relevant to test whether the fact that Strömpilen since the introduction of the new bags have started to
take out a fee for the bags, in contrast to before when bags were given out to customers for free, affect consumers attitude towards the new bags. Therefore, we tested question 5: attitude towards price premium, against question 7: attitudes towards the paper bags, in order to see whether consumers attitude towards price premiums influence their attitude towards the bags. Our results show that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that there is a relationship between the two variables. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.

Bar chart 6:8 Attitude towards price premium. 20 percent are very positive to the fact that Strömpilen has introduced a fee for the bags. 30 percent are somewhat positive and 25 percent are neither positive nor negative. 13 percent are somewhat negative and 7 percent are very negative. 5 percent had no opinion.

Contrary to what Coddington (1993) argued in the theory about price premiums, our results strongly indicate that consumers are not necessarily negative towards price premiums. In this case the results show that consumers in some cases can even hold a positive attitude towards price premiums.

To get a second perspective on this we also wanted to find out whether consumers who said that they were willing to pay for environmental attributes had a more positive attitude towards price premiums than those who were not willing to pay for environmental attributes. Therefore we tested question 6: willingness to pay for environmental attributes, against question 5. The result from this test also shows that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that there is a relationship between the variables. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.

Bar chart 6:9 Willingness to pay for environmental gain. 79 percent are more willing to pay for an environmental friendly bag than an ordinary bag. 10 percent are not more willing to pay for an environmental friendly bag and 11 percent did not have an opinion.

As we can see a strong majority of the respondents were willing to pay extra for environmental attributes. This can be related to the arguments of Bhattacharya and Sen (2004) that say that companies’ socially responsible actions could attract consumers who are willing to pay a higher price for the sake of the environment. The reasons behind this can be further connected to the theory of the value-expressive function which will be discussed later on.
In the theory chapter about the utilitarian function, the compromising of product attributes such as for example quality and convenience are also discussed. How quality and convenience is defined in the case of the paper bags is hard for us to decide, therefore we instead tested how more specified attributes; sustainability, size, appearance, and environmental friendliness of the bags influence consumers overall perception of the bags. To see the bar charts see Appendix B2: Bart charts 6:10-6:13 Opinion of different product attributes.

Looking closer into how consumers perceive the different product attributes of the bag we find that all attributes in general are perceived as positive. However, the results show that the sustainability and the size of the bags are more often perceived as negative than the appearance and the environmental friendliness of the bags. Also, more of the respondents have answered that they have no opinion of the sustainability and the size than of the appearance and the environmental friendliness.

We tested the relationship between the different parts of question 8: perception of the product attributes, and question 7: attitude towards the paper bags. The results from the chi-square test show that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that there is a relationship between all four of the product attribute-variables and the attitude towards the concept. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.

6.2.2 The Value-Expressive function
To test our second assumption “the more important environmental responsibility is to a consumer, the more positive her/his attitude towards the *no plastic bags* concept will be” we tested both question 12: importance of corporate responsibility and question 11: importance of individual responsibility, against question 4. According to the results obtained from the chi-square tests there is overwhelming evidence to infer that there is a relationship between both of the variables and the attitude towards the concept. Hence our assumption seems to be valid.

**SPSS output**

| Importance of individual responsibility vs. attitude towards concept | individual responsibility |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | other | large | Total |
| Att_concept | other | Count | 5 | 7 | 12 |
|  | Expected Count | 1.1 | 10.9 | 12.0 |
|  | large | Count | 3 | 71 | 74 |
|  | Expected Count | 6.9 | 67.1 | 74.0 |
| Total | Count | 8 | 78 | 86 |
|  | Expected Count | 0.0 | 70.0 | 80.0 |

Chi-Square Tests

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<th>Pearson Chi-Square</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Table 6.2 Assumption 2 – Chi-Square test

Since the p-value 0.000 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables *importance of individual responsibility* and *attitude towards concept* are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.
**SPSS output**

**Table 6:3 Assumption 2 – Chi-Square test**

Since the p-value 0.007 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables *importance of corporate responsibility* and *attitude towards concept* are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

In order to test consistency in the answers we tested whether respondents who consider corporate responsibility to be important also consider individual responsibility to be important and vice versa. Also here it can be established that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that there is a relationship between the variables. This indicates that the answers are consistent. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.

**Chi-Square Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asym. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>0.007</td>
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</table>

Table 6:3 Assumption 2 – Chi-Square test

Since the p-value 0.007 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables *importance of corporate responsibility* and *attitude towards concept* are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

In order to test consistency in the answers we tested whether respondents who consider corporate responsibility to be important also consider individual responsibility to be important and vice versa. Also here it can be established that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that there is a relationship between the variables. This indicates that the answers are consistent. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.

**Bar chart 6:14 Importance of individual responsibility.** 57 percent of the respondents consider it important that individuals act environmentally responsible to a very high extent respectively 31 percent to a high extent. 6 percent answered that it is important neither to a high nor a low extent. 2 percent answered that it is important to a low extent and 2 percent to a very low extent. 2 percent had no opinion.

**Bar chart 6:15 Importance of corporate responsibility.** 82 percent answered that they consider it important for companies to take responsibility for the environment to a very large extent, 12 percent to a large extent and 5 percent in neither a large nor a small extent. 1 percent answered that it was important to a low extent.
Comparing the results of these two questions we see that the respondents in general felt that it is important that individuals act socially responsible, but even more important that corporations act socially responsible.

6.2.3  The Ego Defensive function

**Bar chart 6:16 Environment as a threat to the individual.** 22 percent worry about how environmental issues will affect their life in the future to a very high extent and 36 percent to a high extent. 25 percent worry neither to a high or low extent. 12 percent worry to a low extent, 2 percent to a very low extent and 2 percent do not worry at all. 1 percent did not have an opinion.

**Bar chart 6:17 Threat of plastic bags to the environment.** 9 percent consider plastic bags to be an environmental threat to a very large extent, 44 percent consider plastic bags as a threat to the environment to a high extent, and 24 percent consider plastic bags as a threat to the environment neither in large nor low extent. 10 percent consider plastic bags as a threat to the environment to a low extent, 4 percent to a very low extent and 2 percent did not consider plastic bags as an environmental threat at all. 7 percent had no opinion.

To test our third assumption “the more concerned a consumer is about environmental threats, the more positive she/he will be towards the no plastic bags concept” we performed two different tests, which is the main question 13: environmental threat and the support question 14: threat of plastic bags, were tested against question 4. The reason for this is that although one may consider environmental issues to be a threat this does not necessarily mean that she/he considers the use of plastic bags to be an environmental issue. On the contrary one may consider the use of plastic bags as a threat to the environment but does not necessarily worry about the environmental threat. The results obtained from the Chi-Square tests show that there is strong evidence to infer that there is a relation between the variables in both cases. For a more detailed view of the results from question 14, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.
Since the p-value 0.011 < 0.05, there is strong evidence to infer that the variables threat of environment and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

### 6.2.4 The knowledge function

Question 3: amount of information received, was (as previously mentioned) built in a way so that the amount of information can be calculated by adding the chosen alternatives and getting a sum in between 0 and 12, where 12 is the highest possible amount and 0 is the lowest and equal to no information received at all. Looking at the results from question 3 we find that 13 percent said that they had not received any information at all. Looking at the cumulative percentages we find that 73 percent had a lower amount than 6 and 98 percent had a lower amount than 9. Hence, only 2 percent had an amount of 9 or higher, and no respondents had an amount of 12. To see the bar chart and exact numbers see Appendix B2: Bart chart 6:18 Amount of information.

For our forth assumption “the more information a consumer has received about the no plastic bags concept, the more positive she/he will be” we tested question 3: amount of information, against question 4. According to the results obtained from the Chi-Square test there is no evidence to infer that there is a relationship between the two variables. Hence our assumption seems to be invalid. This contradicts our selected theories which, among other things, suggest that information plays a very important role for how successful a CSR initiative will be. According to the theory about the knowledge function of attitudes people will create an attitude towards an object based on the knowledge they have about the object. To see the bar charts 6:19-6:24 see Appendix B2: Information channels.
Since the p-value 0.257 > 0.10, there is no evidence to infer that the variables amount of information and attitude towards the concept are related. Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, the two variables are independent.

Looking closer at the information channels from which the respondents answered that they had received the information we find that in each information category, except the category information received at the shopping mall, approximately 50 percent of the respondents answered that they had not received any information at all. In each category between 25 and 43 percent answered that they have received little information about the concept. The biggest difference we found is when looking at which information channels respondents have answered that they have received a lot of information. Here the number of respondents varies between 7 and 10 percent in all categories, except from the category information received at the shopping mall where 37 percent answered that they had received a lot of information. These numbers together show that the shopping mall seems to be the main source of information about the concept. As Strömpilen cannot be considered an independent source of information, according to theory this should leave room for scepticism amongst consumers. However, as our results shows that the respondents in general are very positive to the no plastic bags initiative this does not seem to be the case. Based on this, both the theories that state that the amount of information a consumer receives have an impact on her/his attitude for the object and the theories that state the importance of the channels from which the information is obtained can be questioned.

We wanted to find out if whether the information is perceived as credible or not affect consumers’ attitude towards the concept. In order to test this we investigated whether or not there is a relationship between if consumers believe that the concept fulfils its purpose and their overall attitude towards the concept. To find an answer to this question we tested the relationship between questions 15: influence of concept on environment and question 4. The results from the Chi-Square test show that there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables are related. Hence, the answers seem to be consistent in this case also. For a more detailed view of the results, including SPSS outputs, please see Appendix B1: Chi-Square tests.
Bar chart 6:25 Influence of concept on the environment. 59 percent considered the no plastic bags initiative as a contribution to a better environment to a large extent, 28 percent to large extent and 8 percent to a small extent. 3 percent did not consider the initiative to contribute to a better environment at all. 2 percent answered that they had no opinion.

### 6.3 Summary of presentation and analysis of empirical findings

Below follows a short summary of the key findings:

**Assumption 1**: there is a relationship between how the bags are perceived and the overall attitude of the no plastic bags concept, seems to be valid based on overwhelming evidence. In relation to this it was established that there is a relationship between the attitudes towards price premiums and the attitude towards the bags. There is also a relationship between price premiums and the willingness to pay for environmental attributes. There was a relationship between all of the different product attributes and the attitude towards the paper bags.

**Assumption 2**: the more important environmental responsibility is to a consumer, the more positive her/his attitude towards the no plastic bags concept will be, seems to be valid based on overwhelming evidence.

**Assumption 3**: the more concerned a consumer is about environmental threats, the more positive she/he will be towards the no plastic bags concept, seems to be valid based on strong evidence.

**Assumption 4**: the more information a consumer has received about the no plastic bags concept, the more positive she/he will be, does not seem to be valid as no evidence was found. However, there was a relationship between the variables influence of concept on environment and the attitude towards the concept.
7 Conclusions and discussion
Based on our findings, this chapter will present the conclusions with emphasis on the theoretical and practical contributions of the study. Within this chapter we illustrate how the purpose of the study has been achieved, by demonstrating how the different sub-purposes have been fulfilled, discussing our research question and presenting the modified version of our own model. Finally, suggestions and recommendations for how to carry on with the concept are presented in the section practical contributions.

7.1 Theoretical contributions
Before we introduce our conclusions, let us recall the purpose of the study; “...to evaluate the aspects that are relevant to consider when implementing an environmental approach in a business context.”

In order to achieve this aspiration the purpose was divided into four sub-purposes, out of which two are discussed below:

☐ To find out how the environmental initiative (explicitly the no plastic bags initiative) has been perceived by customers.

As the empirical findings show the majority of the respondents hold a positive attitude towards the no plastic bags concept. A majority of the respondents were regular customer at Strömpilen. When given an option, only a small minority of the respondents preferred to use plastic bags. In addition to this, a strong majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the concept should be continued.

☐ To investigate factors that can affect consumer attitudes positively or negatively.

In order to find out what factors that has formed consumer we created four key assumptions based on the functional theory of attitudes.

✓ A1: There is a relationship between how the bags are perceived and the overall attitude of the no plastic bags concept.

After analysing the empirical data it was established that there is a relationship between consumers’ attitudes towards the paper bags and consumers’ attitudes towards the concept. In connection to this assumption we discovered some other relevant aspects that should be enlightened;

- Consumers are not necessarily negative towards price premiums. In fact the majority in this study was positive towards the added price premium;
- The majority of the consumers were willing to pay for environmental attributes, and
- The product attributes that seemed to affect the consumers’ attitude towards the bags were size, appearance and sustainability. This indicates that compromising of these attributes may affect consumer attitudes negatively.
A2: The more important environmental responsibility is to a consumer, the more positive her/his attitude towards the no plastic bags concept will be.

The analysis shows that there is a relationship between how important consumers consider environmental responsibility to be and their attitude towards the concept. This could be confirmed both with regards to individual responsibility and corporate responsibility. This indicates that environmentally engaged consumers are likely to identify themselves with Strömpilen, due to their environmental friendly image.

A3: The more concerned a consumer is about environmental threats, the more positive she/he will be towards the no plastic bags concept.

In the analysis it was established that the extent to which a consumer feels threatened by environmental issues affects her/his attitude towards the concept. This indicates that our assumption is valid. The fact that the majority feel that plastic bags are a threat towards the environment had an impact on their attitude towards the concept further confirms that the assumption is valid.

A4: The more information a consumer has received about the no plastic bags concept, the more positive she/he will be.

The results show that no relationship could be established between how much information a consumer has received about the concept and her/his attitude towards it. An interesting aspect that was discovered was that the information obtained was in general perceived as credible among the respondents. Since the largest information channel was found to be the Strömpilen shopping centre this contradicts the theory, which states that more independent sources of information will be perceived as more credible.

Based on the outcome of the two sub-purposes, presented above, we can now conclude by answering our research question; what factors affect consumer attitudes of an environmental corporate social responsibility (CSR) approach?

- The perception of the actual product is of importance for environmental CSR initiatives. The product and its attributes can be related to the consumers’ attitude towards a concept.

- Consumers can under certain circumstances be positive towards price premiums.

- Consumers who are environmentally engaged are more likely to be positive towards an environmental CSR initiative.

- Consumers who are more concerned about how the environmental threat will affect them are likely to be positive towards an environmental CSR initiative.

- The amount of information communicated to consumers does not necessarily affect their attitudes.
Independent information channels are not necessarily deemed as more credible amongst consumers and hence not necessarily more efficient.

7.1.1 Applying the model to our findings

Let us recall that a model was created within the theoretical framework. This was in accordance with the third sub-purpose; to develop a model based upon the theoretical framework and evaluate it. Below the model can be reviewed once again:

![Figure 7:1 Model of the theoretical framework](image1)

Based on our findings we have been able to draw the conclusions presented earlier in this chapter. As a final step the model has been applied to the findings in this study. The different parts of the model were tested and either proven with overwhelming evidence (highly significant), strong evidence (significant) or no evidence/relevance (not significant). As our fourth assumption could not be confirmed as valid, this part has been separated from the other parts of the model.

![Figure 7:2 Applied model of the theoretical framework](image2)
Evaluating the two models, it should be noted that they differ in some very important aspects. The theories regarding the utilitarian function as well as the ones regarding the value-expressive function has via assumptions 1 and 2 been verified with overwhelming evidence. The theories regarding the ego-defensive function has via assumption 3 been verified with strong evidence. Since the evidence in this case is less strong this function has a lighter shade of colour in the figure. Comparing the first model with the modified version, you can see that the knowledge function has been disconnected and presented in an even lighter shade of colour. This is because the theories regarding this fourth assumption could not be verified. Due to this result the model cannot be fully applied to the implementation of the no plastic bags concept. However, we choose to not reject the developed model as other factors could have had an impact on this result. A possible factor could perhaps be that people as a result of the ongoing debate on environmental issues have already gained deeper knowledge of the subject. This in combination with the unpretentious features of the bags and the straightforward name (no plastic bags) could perhaps be sufficient for consumers to perceive the concept as positive. Although the evidence shows that there is no significant relation between the amount of information received and consumer attitudes towards this concept, we cannot say for certain that this will be the case in a different context.

7.2 Practical contributions

Based on the conclusions presented in the last section we can now elaborate some suggestions and recommendations and hence, answer our fourth sub-purpose:

- **To determine how the initiative should be carried on in order to obtain a positive development.**

  According to the findings the following is suggested:

  - The concept should be maintained.

  - The price premium does not seem to affect customer attitudes negatively in this case as customers in general are willing to pay for environmental gain.

  - Be cautious with compromising of the product attributes of the bags, as these affect consumers perception of bags and in turn possibly the concept.

  - The information about the concept was perceived as positive despite the fact that the shopping centre seems to be the only information channel that has really reached out to customers. This could be an indication that it is not cost-effective to spend large amount of money on other marketing channels. However, in order to take such an important decision further investigation should be performed.

7.3 Suggestions for further research

As we are not aiming to generalise it is important to keep in mind, without diminishing our results, that this study should only be seen as an illustration of what factors have affected a specific CSR initiative. This means that the conclusions from this study could in theory be applied to other cases/scenarios, but it is important to be modest when doing so. It would be interesting to see similar researches in relation to other CSR initiatives. Another subject for further research could be to focus solely on one of the assumptions and conduct a more thorough investigation of that one. It
would be especially interesting to see further studies based upon the fourth assumption as our results show no evidence that this assumption would be valid. Regardless of which assumption being subject to further investigation, a qualitative approach would perhaps add another dimension to that research. Another very interesting aspect would be if a comparative study was performed, especially since, as mentioned in the background, initiatives to take action against plastic bags has been undertaken in many different countries.
8 Quality of the study

Quality of research is divided into reliability and validity. According to Ejlertsson (2005:102-103) reliability of a research increases with the quality of the questions. This means that with high reliability there is a high probability that repeated measurements would give the same answers. Discussing validity, Ejlertsson (2005:100-101) argues again for the importance of the questions, but this time in the sense that a lot of thought should go into formulating them; that they should measure the right aspects. Importantly the author continues by saying that it should be remembered that validity is not about the questions per say but rather the context in which they are used; how they relate to the purpose and especially to the chosen theories.

In the above context, when evaluating the questionnaire it is important to keep in mind the influence the wording and the order of the questions can have. This study was carefully planned and executed; from the designing to the distribution of the surveys. At this stage it is important to realise that the perfect questionnaire does not exist. That all respondents will interpret the questions the same way and answer them correctly is a myopic belief. (SCB, 2007:24). Even though the perfect questionnaire does not exist, we took precautions against blunders by performing a pilot-study.

It should be noted that the questionnaire was developed in Swedish as the study was performed in Sweden. The only objective of the English version attached in the appendix is to provide non-Swedish readers to understand its context. Therefore, although not done intentionally, one should keep in mind that interpretation of the questions may differ slightly due to translation.

Regarding the reliability of the study, we strongly believe that if reproduced, the study would show similar results. However, as mentioned in the theory, the nature of attitudes is not a fixed constant but may be altered over time. Prior to designing the survey, we looked at a smaller study performed at Strömpilen before they implemented the no plastic bags concept. The results were later compared and were consistent. Therefore, we are of the opinion that this has increased not only the validity but just as well the reliability of our study.

An important aspect to remember is that this thesis was written on assignment. This could bring in unforeseen complications such as the contradiction between the academic requirement and the company/organisation wills and desires. In addition to this, the time constraint further complicates these issues. With more time and resources to further develop many aspects there could have been deeper focus on each individual part of the theory. Another sampling method could have been used and more exact calculations of the population could have been made in order to find the optimal sample size. Also, the study could have been performed at several occasions and different locations.
References


*Dagens Nyheter*, “Se etik som en möjlighet för affärerna”. 15/01/09, p. 25


Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC), *Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007*


*Märket magasin*, “Här är kundernas betyg på det 100 största köpcentrumen” nr.1 2008


Appendix
Appendix A1
Questionnaire (Swedish)

Tack för att Du tar tid att fylla i denna enkät. Resultaten kommer att användas i vår c-upsats i företagsekonomi som syftar till att mäta och analysera konsumenters attityder till Strömpilen som handelsplats och initiativet no plastic bags; beslutet att ta bort plastpåsarna från butikerna, med undantag av ICA Maxi, på Strömpilen. Givetvis är deltagande i undersökningen helt anonymt.

1. Hur ofta handlar du på Strömpilen?
   □ varje vecka
   □ 2-3ggr/månad
   □ 1 gång/månad
   □ mer sällan än 1 gång/månad
   □ detta är mitt första besök
   □ vet ej

2. Vilken är din inställning till Strömpilen som handelsplats?
   □ mycket positiv
   □ ganska positiv
   □ varken positiv eller negativ
   □ ganska negativ
   □ mycket negativ
   □ vet ej

Information
3. Har du tagit del av någon information om Strömpilens initiativ no plastic bags och dess syfte via;
   □ Annonser i media? □ ingen □ lite □ mycket
   □ Reportage i från tidningar/TV? □ ingen □ lite □ mycket
   □ Reklam på Strömpilsområdet? □ ingen □ lite □ mycket
   □ Personal i butikerna? □ ingen □ lite □ mycket
   □ Utomhusreklam/reklam på offentliga platser? □ ingen □ lite □ mycket
   □ Vänner/bekanta? □ ingen □ lite □ mycket

   Om du har svarat “ingen” i alla ovanstående kategorier - hoppa över fråga 4

4. Baserat på den information du har tagit del av om no plastic bags vilken är din inställning till initiativet?
   □ mycket positiv
   □ ganska positiv
   □ varken positiv eller negativ
   □ ganska negativ
   □ mycket negativ
   □ vet ej
Pris
5. Vilken är din attityd till att butiker på Strömpilen har börjat ta betalt för sina påsar?
   □ mycket positiv
   □ ganska positiv
   □ varken negativ eller positiv
   □ ganska negativ
   □ mycket negativ
   □ vet ej

6. Betalar du hellre för en miljövänlig påse än en vanlig påse?
   □ ja □ nej □ vet ej

Produktattribut
7. Vad tycker du om de nya papperspåsarna?
   □ mycket bra
   □ bra
   □ mindre bra
   □ dåliga
   □ ingen åsikt

Om du har svarat ”ingen åsikt” - hoppa över fråga 8.

8. Hur uppfattar du papperspåsarnas olika egenskaper?
   hållbarheten □ positiv □ negativ □ vet ej
   utseendet □ positiv □ negativ □ vet ej
   storleken □ positiv □ negativ □ vet ej
   miljövänligheten □ positiv □ negativ □ vet ej

9. Vad tycker du om att Strömpilen har tagit bort plastpåsen som alternativ för dig som kund?
   □ positivt □ varken positivt eller negativt □ negativt □ vet ej

    □ tygpåse/egen väska
    □ papperspåse
    □ plastpåse

Miljö
11. I vilken utsträckning anser du att det är viktigt att varje individ tar sitt ansvar när det gäller miljön?
   □ mycket stor
   □ stor
   □ varken stor eller liten
   □ liten
   □ mycket liten
   □ inte alls
   □ vet ej
12. I vilken utsträckning anser du att det är viktigt att företag tar sitt ansvar när det gäller miljön?
   □ mycket stor
   □ stor
   □ varken stor eller liten
   □ liten
   □ mycket liten
   □ inte alls
   □ vet ej

13. I vilken utsträckning oroar du dig för hur miljön kommer att påverka ditt liv i framtiden?
   □ mycket stor
   □ stor
   □ varken stor eller liten
   □ liten
   □ mycket liten
   □ inte alls
   □ vet ej

14. I vilken utsträckning ser du användandet av plastpåsar inom handeln som ett hot mot miljön?
   □ mycket stor
   □ stor
   □ varken stor eller liten
   □ liten
   □ mycket liten
   □ inte alls
   □ vet ej

15. Anser du att initiativet no plastic bags är ett bra sätt att bidra till en bättre miljö?
   □ mycket
   □ delvis
   □ lite
   □ inte alls
   □ vet ej

16. Tycker du att Strömpilen ska fortsätta med no plastic bags initiativet?
   □ ja    □ nej    □ vet ej

---

Slutligen skulle vi vilja ha några enkla uppgifter om dig själv. Dessa uppgifter är betydelsefulla för den statistiska analysen.

17. Kön:
   □ kvinna    □ man

18. Ålder:
   □ under 25 □ 25-45 □ 46-65 □ över 65

Tack för Din medverkan! 😊
Appendix A2
Questionnaire (English)

Thank you for taking your time to fill out this survey. The results will be used in our bachelor thesis in business administration, which aims to measure and analyze the attitudes of consumers towards the Strömpilen shopping centre and the decision to exclude all plastic bags from the stores, with exception for ICA Maxi, at Strömpilen.

1. How often do you shop at Strömpilen?
   □ weekly
   □ 2-3 times a month
   □ once a month
   □ less frequent than once a month
   □ this is my first visit to Strömpilen
   □ no opinion

2. Which is your attitude towards Strömpilen?
   □ very positive
   □ somewhat positive
   □ neither positive nor negative
   □ somewhat negative
   □ very negative
   □ no opinion

Information

3. Have you received any information about the initiative of Strömpilen from;
   Adds in media? □ none □ little □ a lot
   Reportages in papers/magazines/TV? □ none □ little □ a lot
   Commercial at the Strömpilen area? □ none □ little □ a lot
   Personnel in the stores? □ none □ little □ a lot
   Commercial at public places? □ none □ little □ a lot
   Friends/family? □ none □ little □ a lot

If you have answered “none” in all of the categories above you can skip question 4.

4. Based on the information you have received which is your attitude towards the no plastic bags initiative?
   □ very positive
   □ somewhat positive
   □ neither positive nor negative
   □ somewhat negative
   □ very negative
   □ no opinion
**Price**

5. Which is your attitude towards the fact that Strömpilen (except ICA Maxi) has started to take out a fee for their bags?
- very positive
- somewhat positive
- neither negative nor positive
- somewhat negative
- very negative
- no opinion

6. Do you rather pay for an environmentally friendly bag than an ordinary bag?
- yes
- no
- no opinion

**Product attributes**

7. What is your opinion about the paper bags?
- very good
- good
- less good
- bad
- no opinion

*If you have answered “no opinion” you can skip question 8.

8. How do you perceive the different attributes of the paper bags?
   - the sustainability  □positive □negative □no opinion
   - the appearance    □positive □negative □no opinion
   - the size          □positive □negative □no opinion
   - the environmental friendliness □positive □negative □no opinion

9. Which is your opinion about the fact that Strömpilen no longer offer the plastic bag as an alternative to you as a consumer?
- positive
- neither positive nor negative
- negative
- no opinion

10. If you get to choose which type of bag do you prefer to use. Chose one alternative.
- canvas bag/own bag
- paper bag
- plastic bag

**Environment**

11. To what extent do you consider it important for individuals to act environmentally responsible?
- very large
- large
- neither large nor small
- small
- very small
- not at all
- no opinion
12. To what extent do you consider it important for companies to act environmentally responsible?
☐ very large
☐ large
☐ neither large nor small
☐ small
☐ very small
☐ not at all
☐ no opinion

13. To what extent are you concerned that the environment will affect your future life?
☐ very large
☐ large
☐ neither large nor small
☐ small
☐ very small
☐ not at all
☐ no opinion

14. To what extent do you consider plastic bags a threat to the environment?
☐ very large
☐ large
☐ neither large nor small
☐ small
☐ very small
☐ not at all
☐ no opinion

15. Do you consider the no plastic bags concept a good way to contribute to a better environment?
☐ very
☐ somewhat
☐ little
☐ not at all
☐ no opinion

16. Do you think that Strömpilen should continue with the concept?
☐ yes  ☐ no  ☐ no opinion

At last we would like you to share basic facts about yourself. These facts are important for the statistical analysis.

17. Gender:
☐ woman  ☐ man

18. Age:
☐ below 25  ☐ 25-45  ☐ 46-65  ☐ above 65

Thank you for participating! 😊
Appendix B1
Chi-Square tests (English)

**SPSS output**

### Opinion of continuing concept vs. attitude towards concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Att_concept</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>other</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opinion of continuing the concept no</td>
<td>Count 7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Expected Count 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Count 3</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Expected Count 0,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count 10</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Expected Count 10,0</td>
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</table>

#### Chi Square Tests

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>55,104*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,000</td>
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</table>

Since the p-value 0.000 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables opinion of continuing concept and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

**SPSS output**

### Attitude towards paper bags vs. attitude towards concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bags_Attitude</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Att_concept</td>
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<td>Count 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>large</td>
<td>Count 7</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count 17</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Expected Count 17,0</td>
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#### Chi-Square Tests

<table>
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<td>0,000</td>
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</table>

Since the p-value 0.000 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables attitude towards paper bags and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.
Since the p-value 0.001 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables attitude towards price premium and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

Since the p-value 0.005 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables attitude towards price premium and willingness to pay for environmental gain are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.
Since the p-value $0.000 < 0.01$, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables sustainability of bags and attitude towards bags are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

### SPSS output

#### Sustainability of bags vs. attitude towards bags

<table>
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<th>Bags_Attitude</th>
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<tr>
<td>negative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
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</table>

#### Chi-Square Tests

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<thead>
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<th>Value</th>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the p-value $0.000 < 0.01$, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables appearance of bags and attitude towards bags are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

### SPSS output

#### Appearance of bags vs. attitude towards bags

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bags_Attitude</th>
<th>opinion of appearance of bags</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>12.437</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the p-value $0.000 < 0.01$, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables appearance of bags and attitude towards bags are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

### SPSS output

#### Size of bags vs. attitude towards bags

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bags_Attitude</th>
<th>opinion of size of bags</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the p-value $0.000 < 0.01$, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables size of bags and attitude towards bags are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

**SPSS output**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bags_Attitude</th>
<th>negative Count</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Count</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the p-value $0.000 < 0.01$, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables environmental friendliness of bags and attitude towards bags are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

**SPSS output**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1t_concept</th>
<th>other</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the p-value $0.000 < 0.01$, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables importance of individual responsibility and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.
Since the p-value 0.007 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables importance of corporate responsibility and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

Since the p-value 0.000 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables importance of individual responsibility and importance of corporate responsibility are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.
Since the $p$-value $0.011 < 0.05$, there is strong evidence to infer that the variables *threat of environment* and *attitude towards concept* are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

**SPSS output**

### Threat of plastic bags vs. attitude towards concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Att concept</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bagsthreat</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>large</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the $p$-value $0.014 < 0.05$, there is strong evidence to infer that the variables *threat of plastic bags* and *attitude towards concept* are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.

**SPSS output**

### Amount of information vs. attitude towards concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Att concept</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFO_amount</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>52.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>large</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected Count</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the $p$-value $0.257 > 0.10$, there is no evidence to infer that the variables *amount of information* and *attitude towards the concept* are related. Thus, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, the two variables are independent.
Since the p-value 0.000 < 0.01, there is overwhelming evidence to infer that the variables influence of concept and attitude towards concept are related. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is true, the two variables are dependent.
Appendix B2
Additional bar charts (English)

Bar chart 6:5 Removing the plastic bags as an alternative

Bar chart 6:6 Consumers own choice

Bar charts 6:10-6:13 Opinion of different product attributes
Bart chart 6:18 Amount of information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bar charts 6:19-6:24 Information channels

Amount of info received from ads in media

Amount of info received from friends and family

Amount of info received from news

Amount of info received at shopping mall